perature required to fuse the glaze. Later another blue, imported originally from Persia, became popular. In times still other colors appeared—green, yellow, purple, reds of various shades, black, and more blues—put on in varying combinations. Many, too, were the figures, scenes, and designs portrayed.

Production was at many centers. The chief place of manufacture was the imperial works at Ching-te Chen, not far from the Poyang Lake, in Kiangsi. Here vast natural deposits of the minerals needed for the manufacture of porcelain facilitated the industry. The finest specimens are from the early reigns of the dynasty, before the best of the clays were exhausted. The Ching-te Chen works either drove out of competition or overshadowed the other centers and were to retain their supremacy until the middle^ of the nineteenth century.

Porcelain wares were largely exported and reached not only the Near East but Europe, and eventually were thought of, with silk and tea, as the characteristic products of China.

SUMMARY

The Ming, while in political might inferior to the Han and the T'ang and in brilliance and originality not equal to the T'ang and the Sung, spanned one of the noteworthy periods of China's history. It ruled all of what we now think of as China proper, for a time it was master of Annam, and for shorter or longer periods Korea, Japan, and lands to the south as far distant as Ceylon acknowledged its suzerainty. In contrast to the earlier dynasties, instead of looking landward toward the north and west as the natural direction in which to extend its power, it faced seaward and southward. Increasingly commercial contacts were not by the overland trade routes but by the ocean. In this

was a fore-
shadowing—although no one of the period could well have fore-
casted them—of those intimate contacts with the West which later were to work the greatest revolution that the Empire had known. The realm was prosperous. More abundant supplies of silver and copper became available and both metals were widely used as mediums of exchange. In culture the China of the Ming dynasty displayed practicality, elegance, diligence, and in a few directions originality, and influenced some of its neighbors, in-
cluding especially Korea and Japan,